

# NI Bulletin

A Publication of Numismatics International Inc.



November 2021

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**ISSN: 0197-3088 Copyright 2019**

**Numismatics International, P.O. Box 570842, Dallas, TX USA 75357-0842**

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**November 2021**

**Number 5**

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All submissions are welcome and can be sent to:  
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Joseph Uphoff  
Editor

## FAMILY INTRIGUES, FRENCH INVASIONS AND A COIN OF LORRAINE STRUCK IN FLORENCE

A turbulent period in the History of Lorraine and its coinage

Robert Ronus NI LM #139

Lorraine or in German Lothringen was one of the states that emerged from the break-up of the Carolingian Empire created by Charlemagne in the 8th -9th century and covering much of Europe. On the western edge of the Holy Roman Empire on the French border, it was coveted by both France and later modern Germany and in modern times changed hands a number of times. Most recently, Hitler seized part of Lorraine from France in 1940 but it was returned to France at the end of the war.

In the 16th century Lorraine was still an independent duchy within the Holy Roman Empire, although the relationship was quite loose. The ruling family was rich and distinguished with connections to the greatest families in Europe. Charles III was Duke from 1545-1608. His mother was Christina, daughter of King Christian II of Denmark and Norway and Isabella of Austria, and he married Claude, daughter of King Henri II of France.

Here is a splendid Taler aux armes struck by Charles in 1569:



Obv.: double cross of Lorraine CARO + D+G+ CAL(alabrien) +  
 LOTHO (Lorraine) + BAR +.GEL(ders) + DVX Armoured bust with  
 ruff rt. in circle  
 Rev.: Circle of 7 crowned arms: (clockwise from top left) Naples

(tournament collar over lis), Jerusalem (cross), Aragon (vertical bars), Bar (Lorraine crosses with 2 addorsed fishes hauriant ), Gelders & Julich (lions rampant l. & r. divided), dividing 15 69, Anjou (7 lis) and old Hungary (horizontal bars) with in crowned Lorraine arms (bend with 3 eagles) in circle

40.5 mm. 28.69 g. Dav.9385. de Mey-Lorraine 494. Flon II, p.638, 60. De Saulcy Pl.XX/2.

The 8 coats of arms on the reverse reflect the family's extensive international connections. An ancestor, René, had been briefly King of Naples (1435-42) before being deposed so the Dukes of Lorraine used the title of Duke of Calabria, the traditional title of the heir apparent of the Kingdom of Naples.

Continuing into the next generation, Charles' eldest son Henri married the sister of Henri of Navarre, who became King of France as Henri IV. One daughter, Christine , married Ferdinando I de' Medici, Grand Duke of Tuscany, another, Antoinette, married Johann Wilhelm , Duke of Jülich-Cleves-Berg, and a third, Elisabeth Renata married Maximilian I, Elector of Bavaria. Of his other two sons, François married Countess Christina of Salm while Charles became a prominent churchman.

Henri succeeded Charles III as Duke of Lorraine. He became known as Henri le Bon, The Good, I am not quite sure why. Here he appears on a Teston struck in 1615:

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Obv.: double cross of Lorraine HENRI. D.G. DVX. LOTH. MARCH (= marquis). D (uke). C (alabriensis). B(ar). G (elders) Armoured bust r. in circle

Rev.: MONETA.NOVA. NANCEI. CVSA (struck in Nancy). 1615 over crowned 9-field Lorraine arms, breaking out of circle 30 mm 8.93 g deMey-Lorraine 571. Flon II,p.674,16. deSaulcy Pl.XXV/2. KM 18.

Henri introduced the title of Marquis. It originally meant a ruler of the Marches (or borderlands) of the Empire and affirmed the independence of Lorraine compared to the states in the interior of the Empire.

The "struck in Nancy" legend on the reverse is typical of coins of the duchy of Lorraine. This coin is dated, which is unusual. Most of Henri's coinage is undated.

Henri had no sons. He wanted to leave the Duchy of Lorraine to Nicole, his eldest daughter by his second marriage to Margherita Gonzaga of Mantua, but a supposed testament by [René II of Lorraine](#) (1473-1508) specified that the duchy could not bypass the male lineage. After negotiations with his brother François, a marriage between Nicole and François' son Charles was agreed in 1621. They were, of course, first cousins. It was no love match.

When Henri died in 1624, they succeeded him jointly. They also struck coinage jointly like this 1624 teston (photo: Jean Elsen):



Obv.: CAR. ET. NIC. D. G. DVC. LOTH. MARC (hio). D (uke). C (alabrie). B (ar). G ((elrie = Gelders) double cross Accolated busts  
 Rev. : MONETA. NOVA. NANCEII. CVS (struck in Nancy) 1624 over crowned shield with arms of old Hungary (horizontal bars), Naples (tournament collar over lis), Jerusalem (cross), Aragon (vertical bars), Anjou (lis), Gelders (lion rampant r.), Julich (lion rampant l.), Bar (Lorraine crosses with 2 addorsed fishes hauriant), in centre escutcheon with Lorraine arms (bend with 3 eaglets)  
 8.71 g De Mey Lorraine 590. Flon II, p. 689, 2;. De Saulcy XXV, 13;. Coll. Robert 1538 var.

They also struck minor coins like this 1625 billon gros or 2 deniers.



Obv.: CAR.ET.NIC.D G DVC. LOTH. ET. BA(r) Crown over eagle  
dividing 16 25

Rev.: MONETA.NOVA. NANCEII C (vsa = struck in Nancy).  
Crowned arms of Lorraine & Bar divided per pale, between 2 crosses of  
Lorraine

20.5 mm 1.38 g de Mey-Lorraine 592v. Flon II,p.691, 12-16. de Saulcy Pl.XXV/15v. KM 29.

Here is a little billon Half Gros or Denier, also dated 1625, with just the arms of the Duchy of Lorraine itself:



Obv.: CAR.ET.NIC.D G DVC LOTH ET B(ar) Crown over eagle dividing 16 25

Rev.: MONETA.NOVA. NANCEII Crowned ornamented shield with arms of duchy of Lorraine (bend with 3 eaglets) 18 mm 1.08 g de Mey-Lorraine 594. Flon II,p.691-693,19-33. De Saulcy Pl.XXV/18. KM 28.

Charles quickly tired of his wife. His father was a willing conspirator. In November 1625, François convoked the States of Lorraine, contesting Nicole's right of inheritance on the basis of René II's testament., and claiming the duchy as the male heir. The States-General of Lorraine felt it a legitimate request and Francis became Duke on 21 November 1625. Five days later, he abdicated in favor of his son, who became Duke Charles IV of Lorraine. The latter had managed to remove his wife's power and become Duke in his own right. He abandoned his wife but remained officially married to her. In 1631 he tried to have his marriage annulled by passing the death penalty - without proof - for witchcraft on Melchior of the Valley, the priest who had performed their marriage ceremony. But that injustice was not corroborated by The Church and Charles IV remained officially married to Nicole. She lived out the last years of her life in Paris, her rights being supported by Louis XIII and Richelieu, his chief minister, and she died there in 1657.

François took the name François II when he became duke. When he quickly handed over to his son, he retained the title of Duke of Lorraine and his rights as ruler of Salm. He even struck silver florins and testons in his own name from 1626 until his death in 1632 at a mint in Badonvillers, in the principality of Sedan.

Here is a 1626 Teston. Apart from the different mint, the design is very similar to the testons of his brother Henri. Indeed, some scholars, including Christian Charlet, have suggested that perhaps the mint on the reverse is a fiction and these coins were struck for him in Nancy with the consent of Charles IV. However, Jules Florange has proved the existence of a mint in Badonvillers.



Obv. : double cross of Lorraine FRANC. II. D:G. DVX. LOTH. MARC. D (uke). C (alabriensis). B(ar). G (elders). Armoured bust r. breaking out of circle



Rev.: MONETA.NOVA. BA. CVSA (struck in Badonvillers)  
1626 over crowned 9-field Lorraine arms breaking out of circle

As soon as he became duke alone, Charles struck coins with his image alone like this 1626 Teston with his young bust with long hair over his neck:



Obv.: double cross of Lorraine CAROLVS. D.G.\_DVX. LOTH. MAR.  
 D (uke) C (alabriensis) B(ar) G (elders). Armoured bust r. with longer

hair and col relevé, breaking out of circle

Rev.: MONETA.NOVA. NANCEII. C (vsa = struck in Nancy) 1\_6\_2\_6

over crowned 9-field Lorraine arms, breaking out of circle

29.5 mm 8.48 g de Mey-Lorraine 603. Flon II,p.699, 6. Rarer type with 1st portrait with long hair and raised (rather than flattened) collar. Not in de Saulcy or PCR or KM.

Charles' hair is neater in this second bust on a 1627 Teston:



Obv.: double cross of Lorraine CAROLVS. D:G. DVX. LOTH. MARCH. D (uke): C (alabriensis). B(ar). G (elders) Armoured bust r. in circle



*Rev.: MONETA.NOVA. NANCEII. CVSA (struck in Nancy) 1627 over crowned 9-field Lorraine arms breaking out of circle 30 mm 8.77 g de Mey-Lorraine 604. Flon II, p.700, 11v (only 1628). De Saulcy Pl.XXVI/4. KM 45*

In this third bust on a 1632 Teston Charles has a neat moustache and a small goatee beard:



Obv.: :double cross of Lorraine CAROLVS. D:G. DVX. LOTH:  
M\_ARCH. D (uke). C (alabriensis). B(ar). G (elders). Armoured bust r.  
with mustache and goatee beard, breaking out of circle

Rev.: MONETA.NOVA. NANCEII. CVSA 1\_6\_3\_2 over crowned 9-  
field Lorraine arms breaking out of circle

30 mm 9.12 g Flon II,p.702, 17. deSaulcy PLXXVI/4. Robert 1546.  
Not in deMey-Lorraine or KM.

Charles was a brilliant soldier but had terrible political judgement. He was involved in French politics, always on the losing side, with disastrous results. Things got off to a bad start. While Emperor Ferdinand II quickly invested Charles in his territories which were fiefs of the Empire, Cardinal Richelieu, King Louis XIII's chief minister, brought up French claims to several lordships inside Lorraine. The king's brother, Gaston d'Orléans, was constantly involved in plots against Richelieu. Charles supported him and hosted him and his army for six months after the failure of the rebellion of the Duke de Montmorency in 1630 and again in 1631-32. Charles also then encouraged Gaston to marry his young sister Marguerite, a marriage strongly opposed by Louis.

Louis and Richelieu responded by invading the Duchy of Bar in 1630. Charles was forced to sign the Treaty of Vic on January 6, 1632, under which he had to promise not to receive Gaston, the Queen Mother or any of Louis' enemies, while allowing French troops to pass through his lands. He also had to hand over his fort at Marsal to the king for 3 years. Accused of not fulfilling all the terms of the treaty, Charles had to hand over more castles and munitions under the Treaty of Liverdun ( June 26 1632) in return for getting back the city and the castle of Bar-le-Duc and some other occupied territories.

Almost immediately Charles broke the treaty by intervening in the 30 Years' War to try and relieve the towns of Hagenau and Brisac which were under siege by the armies of the Protestant Swedish King Gustavus Adolphus. Despite his religion, Richelieu was cynically supporting the Swedes against the Catholic Habsburg emperor. Charles was defeated and in 1633 Lorraine was invaded and ravaged by both French and Swedish armies. Under two more treaties in 1633, Charles, among other

things, had to hand over his capital, Nancy, to Louis XIII for 4 years. On September 25 Louis entered the city at the head of his army and Charles abdicated in favour of his brother, Cardinal Nicolas François. The act of abdication was formally signed on January 19 1634.

Richelieu was suspicious of the handover between the brothers, although Nicolas-François was trusted more by the French than Charles. As part of a new peace agreement, there was discussion of Nicolas-François marrying Richelieu's niece. However, with negotiations going nowhere. Nicolas-François had another idea. He granted himself a dispensation to marry Claude-Françoise, the younger daughter of the late duke Henri and the unfortunate Nicole's sister (and also his first cousin). The next day he sent a letter to the Pope explaining his reasons for renouncing the cardinalate. He was relieved of his vows and married his cousin on March 8, 1634.

The population of the duchies remained deeply hostile to the French occupation. This, as well as the unexpected marriage of the "cardinal", led the French to put the ducal family under house arrest. However, on April 1, 1634, Nicolas-François and his wife managed to escape. Respectively disguised as a page and a valet, they joined Charles IV at Besançon in Franche-Comté, ruled by Spain, and then went on to Tuscany, where they were welcomed by Nicolas-François' aunt Christine, wife of the Grand Duke.

It was there, in Florence, that Nicolas-François struck his only coinage. His aunt Christine of Lorraine allowed him to strike testons in his name, dated 1634 & 1635. Here is one.



Obv.: NFRANC.D.G.DVX LOTH. MARC. D.\_ C (alabrien). B(ar). G (elders). Armoured bust r.

Rev.: MONETA.NOVA.FLORENT. CVSA (struck in Florence) 1634 over crowned 9-field Lorraine arms

29.5 mm 8.25 g de Mey-Lorraine 611. Flon II, p.707,1. De Saulcy Pl.XXVII/1. MIR 319/1. CNI XII,p.385,1 (Tav.XXVI,16). KM 55.

The coin is clearly marked as struck in Florence. These testons never circulated in Lorraine but were used in the Levant trade with the Ottoman Empire.

With the French firmly in control of all the territories of the Dukes of Lorraine, Nicolas-François abdicated and handed back the title to Charles. After 3 years in Florence, he and his wife moved on to stay with his uncle by marriage, Maximilian I, the Duke of Bavaria, in Munich in August 1636 and finally to Vienna where he stayed for eighteen years. The Duchess Claude died in childbirth in 1648, however leaving two surviving sons and a daughter who ensured the dynastic continuity. The elder son would become Duke of Lorraine as Charles V.

The French occupation lasted from 1634 to 1661, first under Louis XIII and then under Louis XIV. One of the towns which Charles had been forced to concede to Louis XIII for 4 years under the Treaty of Liverdun (June 26 1632) was Stenay, a fortress town on the Meuse river. Although legally it remained part of Lorraine, a French mint was set up there in 1635. The first reason was that the Nancy mint was closed and there was a need for copper doubles tournois for daily commerce in Lorraine. The demand was being met by massive issues by neighbouring rulers in the Ardennes, Arches-Charleville, Sedan, Cugnon and the Trévoux mint in Dombes. It would be profitable for the French government to mint royal doubles tournois for this market, but the nearest mint was far away, in Lyon. The government first came up with ideas for a mint at Mezières or Château-Regnault or Mouzon. There was also a second, perhaps even more important reason. In 1635, in an extension of French intervention in the Thirty Years' War against the Habsburgs, Louis XIII declared war on Habsburg Spain and invaded the Netherlands. A large amount of doubles tournois would be needed for the troops. With the Paris and Amiens mints not working at that time and Lyon far away, a mint in the Ardennes could supply this coinage. It was finally the Comte de Soissons, Louis

XIII's cousin and a prince of the blood, who decided to open a mint at Stenay, occupied by the French and temporarily under his control as governor of Champagne. It is no coincidence that the decree of the Conseil d'Etat to set up the mint at Stenay was issued on May 19 1635, the same day as the declaration of war against Spain.

Copper doubles<sup>s</sup> tournois with the portrait of Louis XIII were only struck at Stenay in 1635. Here is an example:



Photo: CGB, Paris

Obv.: LOYS.XIII.R. DE. FRAN. ET. NAV (arre). Armoured adult bust r. with lace collar, in circle, below in legend A.

Rev.: cross pattée DOVBLE.TOVRNOIS. 1635 3 lis in circle  
20.5 mm 2.16 g Droulers 2/DL6. CGKL 528 (type 3).

The dies seems to have come straight from Paris since the Paris mintmark A appears on the obverse.

At some point in 1635 the denomination of these coins changed from the royal French double tournois to double lorrain, i.e., double of Lorraine. It appears that the royal order for coins for the war in the Spanish Netherlands had been fulfilled. Stenay now fell under the Comte de Soissons as Governor of Champagne. He decided to continue to strike the copper coins at Stenay on his own authority without any order from

the king. Soissons was following the example of the rulers of a number of independent principalities within France or on its borders as mentioned earlier – Boisbelle-Henrichemot, Orange, Arches-Charléville, Sedan, Chassepierre-Cugnon, Phalsbourg & Lixheim, even the papal territory of Avignon – who struck imitations of royal double tournois. It was very profitable for these great lords, the Duke de Sully, the Prince of Orange-Nassau, the Prince of Sedan, the Papal Legate at Avignon etc. at the expense of the French king. Not having his own independent principality, the Comte de Soissons could not strike his double tournois in his own name but did so with the king's title and bust. In this he was also following the example of the Duke de Rohan, who illegally struck such coins in Montpellier and Montauban during the Huguenot Rebellions (1622-29). However, concerned that such direct copies of the royal coinage might expose him to charges of lèse-majesté, Soissons in 1635 replaced the legend "double tournois" by "double lorrain". These doubles lorrains were struck in great quantities. However, on 24 April 1637, the Paris Cour des monnaies (Court of Coinage) ordered a ban on all these illegal or semi-legal doubles tournois and doubles lorrains, including those of Stenay.

Here is the first type of this double lorrain:



Obv.: LOYS.XIII.R. DE. FRAN. ET. N (avarre).      Laureled and armoured adult bust r. with ruff, in circle, below in legend A.

Rev.: cross pattee DOVBLE. LORAIN. 1635    3 lis in circle

21mm 2.61 g CGKL Type 4. 530b. Droulers 2/DL9.

The type is almost a hybrid between the earlier double tournois and the double lorrain. The obverse is again like a Paris double tournois, with the Paris A mintmark still below the bust.

Here is a later type in somewhat better grade:



Photos Agence Chris Numismatique, Metz

Obv.: LOYS.XIII. R.DE. FRAN. ET. NA (varre)      Laureled and armoured bust r. with small beard and “collarete” (elaborate collar), in circle

Rev.: cross pattee DOVBLE. LORRAIN. 1637.    3 lis in circle  
20 mm   3.14 g    CGKL 542c. De Mey Lorraine 618. Droulers (1987) 152. De Saulcy Pl.XXVII/2v. Gadoury 13v.

Meanwhile, in exile, Charles of Lorraine had entered the imperial service in the Thirty Years' War and fought in the crushing victory at Nördlingen over the Protestant armies in September 1634. With an army varying between 4000 and 20,000 men, he conducted a true guerilla war against French troops from the massif of the Vosges to the Luxembourg frontier. In 1638, at the head of an army of Spaniards and loyal Lorraine soldiers, after two victories over French forces, he marched into Lorraine. He unsuccessfully laid siege to Lunéville but he was able to take possession of the towns of Rembervillers, Epinal and Remiremont. He immediately set up a mint at Remiremont where he struck gold pistoles of 6.70 g (wrongly called double pistoles by Flon and some other authors) and silver testons in 1638 and 1639. Here is the Teston. The

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design is the same as Charles' earlier coins, although with an older bust and the different mint name. The quality is good, although the weight has in many examples slipped a little.



Obv.: double cross of Lorraine  
 CAROLVS. D.G. DVX. LOTH.  
 MARCH. D (uke). C (alabriensis).  
 B(ar). G (elders) Armoured bust  
 r. in circle

Charlet has suggested that these coins may actually have been struck outside Lorraine in Besançon and that the words “struck in Remiremont” are a political message to maintain Charles’ claim to Lorraine.

Remiremont was a neutral territory built around an abbey. The abbess at the time was Charles' aunt.

Charles was pushed out of Lorraine in 1639. Nevertheless, new negotiations with France led to the Treaty of Saint-Germain-en-Laye of April 2, 1641. Charles recovered Lorraine but under a French protectorate and had to undertake not to conclude an alliance with the House of Austria. Nevertheless, barely a few weeks later, he became involved in another anti-Richelieu plot led by Louis de Bourbon-Condé, Comte de Soissons. With Soissons's death (he accidentally shot himself in the head when raising the visor of his helmet with his pistol) and the collapse of the plot, Richelieu, although seriously ill, cancelled any plans to withdraw from Lorraine and decided to arrest Charles, who succeeded in fleeing at the end of July 1641 and resumed the fight against France.

The treaties of Westphalia of October 24, 1648, which ended the 30 Years' War and formalised a new frontier between France and the Empire, left the fate of the duchies in suspense. Excluded from these treaties, Charles resumed once again his war against France. This was the period of the Fronde (1648-54), a series of rebellions and plots by Parliament and the great noble families in opposition to the growth of central royal power under Richelieu and his successor Mazarin. Charles had a guerilla army which he used to support these rebellions and in 1652 was in a position to threaten Paris. However, he lost his advantage and his credibility in seeking to negotiate both with Mazarin and the Fronde princes. Spain, his long time protector, arrested him in Brussels (then in the Spanish Netherlands) on January 25 1654 and then transferred him to the Alcazar of Toledo. He spent five years in detention. The intervention and the efforts of his brother Nicolas-François allowed him to be released on October 15, 1659. The Treaty of the Pyrenees (November 7 1659), which settled the long conflict between France and Spain and its territories near the French border, included clauses restoring Lorraine (except the Duchy of Bar and certain key military strongholds) to Charles. Charles refused to sign it and succeeded in convincing the dying Mazarin to include the return to him of Bar under the Treaty of Vincennes in February 1661.

During their long occupation the Duchies of Lorraine and Bar were put under French administration. Louis XIII created a parliament in Metz in 1633 and then in 1634-37 an *Intendance de Lorraine, de Bar et des Trois Evêchés* (Stewardship of Lorraine, Bar and the Three Bishoprics, the three formerly independent bishoprics of Metz, Verdun, and Toul). In 1641 the Parliament of Metz struck silver and copper jetons on the occasion of an important reform of local jurisdictions (*baillages*) placed under its authority. In 1659 jetons were struck showing Louis XIV on horseback treading on arms; the French arms were represented on the reverse in two chains of royal orders (St. Michel and the Holy Spirit) accompanied by the legend DE. LINTENDO. DE. LORRne. BARROIS. ET. EVESCHEZ. This jeton was no doubt struck no doubt on the occasion of the Etrennes, New Year gifts traditionally made in January, often jetons in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. This jeton, struck in 1659, was a provocation at a time when the Treaty of the Pyrenees negotiations were under way which envisaged the restoration of the duchies of Lorraine and Bar to Charles IV.

In 1660, after the treaty had been signed, two new jetons were struck, one in the name of Louis XIV with his portrait, the other with the two names and portraits of Louis XIV and his young queen, Marie-Thérèse. They have the same reverse: a sun lighting up the countryside, accompanied by the legend DE. L'INT. D. LORR. BARR. ET. EVESCHEZ. Feuardent classifies these jetons following the earlier one as equally relating to the *Intendance de Lorraine, de Bar et des Trois Evêchés*. However, the word INT, short for *Intendance*, may have a subtle secondary meaning of *Interêt* (interest), in the sense that it is in the interest of the Lorraine territories to be in submission to the will of the *Roi-Soleil*, the Sun King. The sun on the reverse symbolises the power of Louis XIV, the Sun King, including over Lorraine.

Even more enigmatic is a fourth jeton struck with the year 1661, presumably before the signing of the Treaty of Vincennes between Mazarin and Charles IV on February 28 1661 under which the latter would regain his possessions of the duchies of Lorraine and Bar. Here it is:



Photo: Christian Charlet

Obv.: LVD.XIII.D.G.\_FR.ET.NAV (arre).REX. Young laurelled bust r.  
 Rev.: HAC.MERCEDE\_ PLACET (she pleases by what she brings)  
 Seated female figure l. holding 2 keys in left hand and offering crown of  
 olive leaves in rt. hand; below in exergue  
 DE.LINT.D.LORR.BARR/ET.EVESCHEZ (from the Intendance of  
 Lorraine, Bar & (The Three) Bishoprics)

These jetons were struck in silver and copper, with 2 obverse varieties.  
 What does the seated female figure signify, holding a laurel crown in her  
 right hand and two keys in her left ?

The academician and polytechnician Pierre-Charles Robert, who held  
 this jeton in his collection, was careful and did not state a view.

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Feuardent thought she represented Lorraine but refrained from stating this clearly; he wrote *la Province* as he had doubts. One can understand the position of both men since this reverse can be interpreted in two ways at first sight and then with a hidden second sense.

At first view, if one thinks like Feuardent that the seated lady represents Lorraine, one can interpret the motif and legend as Lorraine presenting her submission to obedience to the Sovereign (the crown, especially a crown of laurels symbolising victory) and offering him the passages across its territories demanded by France to reach Alsace, province where France's rights had been confirmed by the Treaties of Westphalia in 1648 (the keys). The legend HAC.MERCEDE PLACET (she pleases by what she brings) completes the motif (the recognition of the king's victory and the keys to the passages across the provinces).

However, one can also see in a latent secondary sense that it is in the well understood interest of Lorraine to be subject to victorious France and to give her the rights of passage she needs to travel to Alsace. In this case, rather than the Intendance of Lorraine, Bar and the three bishoprics, the royal jeton indicates the political path Lorraine must follow, in accordance with the future treaty of February 28 1661 (and even more under the strange treaty of Montmartre in 1662, when Charles agreed to give France his duchies of Lorraine and Bar in return for a usufruct during his lifetime and the Dukes of Lorraine and their family becoming princes of the blood of France). Christian Charlet put forward this second interpretation in his 2016 article in *Numismatique et Change*.

In any case, the Treaty of Vincennes set the stage for Charles' last coinage. He initially struck some gold charles d'or in Paris in 1661 and 1662 and also half écus in 1663, 1664 and 1665. His mint in Nancy reopened in April 1663 and he struck gold, silver and billon coins until 1669. Here is a 1665 Teston. The bust is older but the arms are unchanged.



Obv.: CAROLVS. D.G. DVX. LOTH. MARCH (= marquis). D (uke). C (alabriensis). B(ar). G (elders) Armoured bust r.  
 Rev.: MONETA.NOVA. NANCEII. CVSA (struck in Nancy). 1665  
 Crowned 9-field Lorraine arms  
 27.5 mm 8.39 g de Mey-Lorraine 626. Flon II, p.714,38. De Saulcy Pl.XXVIII/1. KM 62.

Charles continued to feud with France. When Louis XIV in 1669 demanded he disband his army, he refused. French troops invaded the duchies again in the summer of 1670. Charles fled to Germany and, without resources, he had to disband his army. However, he received diplomatic and eventually military support from Emperor Leopold I and some German states. Pleas on his behalf to Louis XIV were unsuccessful but he had some military successes. Finally, he inflicted a heavy defeat

on a French army on August 11 1675 at the Battle of Konz Bridge. The following month he fell ill and died at the age of 71.

Lorraine and Bar were occupied by French troops until the Treaty of Ryswick in 1697 which returned them to Leopold I of Lorraine, great-nephew of Charles IV and grandson of Nicolas-François.

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NOTE: My thanks to Christian Charlet for his considerable assistance in the production of this article



*Sear 1599*

## She Who Would be Empress

Michael T. Shutterly NI#2703

The Byzantine Emperor Leo IV died in 780 leaving his 9-year-old son Constantine VI to succeed him. Due to Constantine's youth, his mother, Irene, ruled as regent. She continued to exercise power even after Constantine reached his majority: in 788 she broke off Constantine's engagement to Rotrude, the daughter of the Frankish king Charlemagne, while pursuing a military alliance with Charlemagne's rivals in Italy.

In 790 Constantine put his mother aside and tried to rule alone. Two years later, following several disastrous military defeats, he restored Irene to power. He continued to demonstrate his incompetence to rule, while managing to alienate every important political, military or religious authority in the Empire. In April 797 Irene deposed her son, blinded and imprisoned him, and seized the throne for herself.

Although many women had held great power in the Empire in the past, they had always exercised their power behind the scenes: Irene was the first woman ever to rule the Empire in her own name and in her own right. She emphasized her unique position by placing her portrait on both the obverse and the reverse of her gold coins. Also, apart from a few very rare solidi struck in Syracuse, her coins give her the Greek title "Basilissa" rather than the traditional Latin "Augusta," which she had used during the reigns of her husband and her son. "Augusta" had always referred to the wife, mother, sister or daughter of an Emperor; by styling herself "Basilissa" Irene asserted that she held power entirely in

her own right and was not dependent upon or subordinate to a husband, father, brother or son.

The obverse of this rare gold solidus depicts the crowned facing bust of Irene holding a globus cruciger and cruciform scepter, with the inscription  $\epsilon\iota\pi\iota\eta\eta\ \beta\alpha\sigma\iota\lambda\iota\sigma\varsigma\eta$  (“Irene the Queen”). The reverse is like the obverse, except that the inscription ends with the control mark  $\Theta$ .

Irene’s seizure of power in her own name had major ramifications in the West: one argument that was made to justify Pope Leo III’s crowning of Charlemagne as “Emperor of the Romans” in 800 was that the imperial throne was then vacant, because under Frankish law a woman could not rule. That same Frankish law is responsible for the fact that no woman ever ruled France as queen regnant: whenever a French king died without a male descendant to succeed him, the throne passed to a male cousin – sometimes a very distant cousin – rather than to the deceased king’s daughter.